

# **EXHIBIT M**

November 14, 2023

Honorable Jennifer H. Rearden  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Rearden,

My name is Pamela McGonigal, the wife of Charlie McGonigal, and on behalf of my daughter Sarah and son Connor I am writing this letter to you in support of sharing our love, support and thoughts about Charlie as a man, husband and father. Although our children are adults, we decided to write to you as a family to minimize the continued targeting of me and my children with what has been a painful experience given the negative media coverage and specific individuals who have continuously harassed me and my children both in person and on social media that continues to this day. I never knew or believed this level of hate, evil and outright lack of compassion for humanity existed until experiencing it first-hand. Charlie would routinely tell me, Sarah and Connor to be careful what you put out on social media as it can become quickly mis-communicated, misinterpreted, weaponized, and used against you and others. In his case, he would feel outright miserable about these attacks against our family, specifically me and our daughter Sarah with all the hateful messaging we received on Facebook and Instagram. We have had to seek multiple restraining orders against one individual as her ongoing harassment of Charlie, me and my children has gone too far and was just hateful, threatening and uncalled for during the last four (4) years. During the holiday season in 2021, we had to file a criminal complaint with the West Orange Police Department in New Jersey in furtherance of having the perpetrator arrested for violating the restraining order. Charlie oftentimes wished and would express anger in wanting these attacks to be directed solely against him and not me, Sarah or Connor. This combined with Charlie's legal situation has only compounded the pain and emotional trauma we continue to endure as his situation unfolds and is resolved.

A little about our family, our daughter Sarah is a graduate of the University of Charleston and currently working in the fashion industry, and our son Connor is in his senior year at Drexel University in Philadelphia pursuing a degree in Finance and minoring in English. Both Charlie and I are very proud of our children as they have displayed all of the positive values and life lessons we have instilled in them both. This is evident on their collective successes in all phases of their lives specifically socially and academically. I am currently employed by the federal government for the Federal Highway Administration and have been for the last twelve years. Charlie and I were always proud to be working for the U.S. government and felt our service was a patriotic duty and one instilled in us as growing up in middle-class families from the Midwest.

Trying to explain to you how Charlie's actions and his subsequent convictions have impacted our family is very difficult. It brings tears to my eyes as I write this letter to you as the pain, anguish, mental and physical trauma this has caused is indescribable. This was not our life plan or how life was supposed to play out for us. We had a life plan and dreams to raise our children, ensure they were provided for with a good education, live in New York City, and appreciate and respect the good things that come from hard work and living a principled life. After retiring from the FBI, Charlie was ambitious and was looking to provide a good life for us as a family, and I believe this ambition led him astray and caused him to lose focus on the reality of his decision making and actions.

Charlie and I met after our undergraduate studies in 1990 at a neighborhood birthday party, and I knew there was something about Charlie different than other young men I had known or dated. Charlie was driven, he desired and dreamed of better things for himself and his family and friends. Charlie, like me grew up in a suburb of Cleveland, Ohio, where I went to parochial schools and Charlie went to public schools. Charlie's family like mine was a hard-working middle class family that instilled in us hard-work, patriotism, and loyalty to your family, friends and your country. Charlie has a charming personality and one that draws people to him, which has yielded hundreds of family friends and associations we have cultivated and cherished over the last forty years. Unfortunately, given Charlie's current situation, many of our family members and friends have broken contact and turned away from us as if we never existed. This too has been very painful and difficult to deal with. At one point we were at the center of many social circles, and now we barely exist and have been publicly shamed. No matter where we were or who we were with, Charlie was always the center of attention, and it always seemed that people would gravitate to us to say hello or spend some time.

Charlie and I were married in 1994 after a two-year relationship and engagement. Shortly after we were married, Charlie was employed as an auditor for a bank and then in 1996 he received an appointment from the FBI. We were newly married, and Charlie and I were living in a modest home in North Olmsted, Ohio, with our 2 cats, Martha and Calvin. We had a loving home, plenty of friends, and Charlie and I were spending a lot of time together and with our families. Needless to say, Charlie was very popular with my parents and 10 brothers and sisters. They all welcomed Charlie with open arms, and he was always a holiday favorite given his charm and congeniality. Charlie was dedicated to me, our families and his work. Charlie always had a strong work ethic, spending long hours at work in an effort to distinguish himself as a leader and a man of good character and principle. He was decorated at work, often times being recognized as employee of the month or winning performance awards as a matter of routine, to include a company turkey during the Thanksgiving holiday. Charlie kindly presented the turkey to my mother and family to be served during that Thanksgiving dinner. Charlie was always humble shying away from attention or recognition, he believed humility was a characteristic he embodied in all he did and one of the many reasons I love him as do our children.

Charlie to this day takes pride in assisting people in need regardless of the situation.

Throughout our time together, we always looked out for people, family, friends and those in need with money, support and any form of assistance. Charlie and I were both raised Catholic and both instilled with a sense of charity and giving back to the community. In the greater Cleveland area, Charlie was an active participant with the Epilepsy Foundation in Cleveland, whereby, he assisted in the organization and was a participant in the Annual Epilepsy Foundation Mud Volleyball Tournament. This event raised thousands of dollars for the support and cure of epilepsy in the greater Cleveland area. Charlie was also a Lector and Eucharistic Minister at our local catholic church. This complimented our belief that a life of faith and giving back to our community served the greater good but also continued our mission of doing good in the world and making a difference. We were both active in the church and this continued throughout our relationship together and ensured our children understood and experienced a life of faith and charity. To this day, Charlie, our children and I are active in our local catholic church in the West Village of New York City.

While residing in the D.C. area, we were members of a local catholic parish in Chevy Chase where Charlie would volunteer every year to participate in the Holiday Food Drive. Charlie would take Sarah and Connor every year for ten years straight and go out to collect bags of donated canned goods for the homeless and underprivileged. At one point, Charlie and I were prepared to take in 5 children from a relative of Charlie's who was not in a position to care for their children. None of Charlie's immediate family were willing or able to take custody of the children given the number of children and the financial responsibility associated with this situation. We could not imagine our nieces and nephews having to be separated and placed in a social services situation. Charlie was adamant that we do whatever was necessary to take care of our family members in need as there was no greater good that could be done. Charlie was always kind and generous with anyone in need and would always go out of his way to ensure people in need were taken care of.

No matter how busy Charlie was he always found a way to give of himself for a good cause. Every May, Charlie would single-handedly organize a charity softball tournament to honor a father in our neighborhood who after a long bout with brain cancer passed away. He left behind a beautiful family of a wife and two children. To honor his memory, Charlie planned an annual charity softball tournament with all proceeds going to cancer research at the National Institute of Health. It was commonly known around Montgomery County Maryland as the "John Fox Charity Softball Tournament for Dads." Charlie organized the entire tournament, recruited players and teams from neighborhoods in Montgomery County. There were official umpires, professional grade softball fields, refreshments, a DJ and it was always kicked off by Charlie praising his fellow fathers in the community and recognizing John Fox as a fallen father. It started with 4 teams and eventually grew to 10 teams with an after-party with music and awards for participants who distinguished themselves on the field. I was supportive of Charlie and his efforts as I knew it was for a good cause, but it was not my favorite event as it occupied so much of his time. Charlie loved organizing the event and at the end of the day and tournament it had

taken its toll physically and Charlie would routinely quip, "You know what Bob Hope would always say, 'sometimes charity hurts'." Charlie poured himself into everything he did, and he still does it today. He has a passion for life, our family and friends, helping others (sometimes to a fault). This is who he is and what motivates him. I cannot imagine a life or a day without him as it would negatively impact me, my family and anyone who knows and interacts with Charlie.

Charlie's decision to join the FBI was not an easy one. He was working for a French-Canadian bank and traveling throughout the U.S. and Canada. Charlie was promoted and was establishing himself as a resource in the internal audit and compliance department for the bank. Charlie was also attending classes in support of his MBA at night. Needless to say, Charlie and I were enjoying our new home and life together, but I recognized that Charlie needed something more than the life of a traveling banker living in suburbia, and I was yearning something different as well. Charlie was appointed to the FBI in March of 1996 upon receiving a letter from the FBI, and he was extremely excited as this was the opportunity we were looking for. The sixteen weeks Charlie spent in Quantico, Virginia were difficult as we were newly married, had a new home and Charlie could not readily leave Quantico to come home. Once Charlie hit his stride at Quantico, he enjoyed the idea of what life would be as an FBI Special Agent. After graduation and during the training, we both decided we wanted to be in New York City.

Upon our relocation and arrival in New York in 1996, Charlie was immediately thrust into working on tragic and heart-wrenching major investigations. He was an initial responder to the TWA Flight 800 crash off the coast of Long Island where he would spend the next 12 months investigating the source of the crash. Charlie was gone for days and worked long hours to include a tour in the Suffolk County Morgue where the victims' bodies were coming in from the crash. I could see it wearing on him and the toll it was taking on him physically and mentally but his faith and love for me never wavered. This was followed up by the plane crash in Far Rockaway, where again, Charlie was an initial responder with FBI, NYPD and the various agencies represented. Charlie was then at the scene of the arrest of the perpetrators of the attempted bombing of the NYC subway. This was followed up by the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, whereby Charlie and a team of FBI agents traveled on a military flight to Dar Es Salam and spent the next 4 months away from home investigating the terrorist bombings of these embassies. When Charlie finally returned to me, he was weathered and had been exposed to much, but he was always strong, disciplined and never lost his sense of who he was and what he represented. This then led to Charlie and the FBI New York office dealing with the 9/11 terrorist attack in New York City. From 1996 to 2002, Charlie and I endured through all of these incidents and managed to start a family with Sarah and Connor coming into the world in 1998 and July 2001. Charlie was on his first day of paternity leave, spending time with Connor when the 9/11 terror attacks occurred. For the next year, Charlie was not home very much but was able to come back early in the morning to spend time with me and our children. As you can imagine, this tested our marriage, but we were strong together and

our faith and love endured and carried us through.

Over the years, and throughout Charlie's career at the FBI, we experienced extended times of separation due to work schedules. In addition, Charlie could never discuss what he was working on given the sensitivities, but we lived and communicated through our shared life experiences, our children, and our dreams for the future. It was not always easy, but we made the best of it.

Charlie is and has always been a tremendous father. Our children love and adore Charlie as he would spend all the precious time he had available with me and our children. He was soft and understanding with them and reinforced faith, family and giving your time and support to people in need. Charlie was an exceptional athlete, and he was supportive of our children playing various sports. Charlie had a gentle hand and calm demeanor in his approach with our children's participation in sports. Charlie never pushed our children and because of his athletic accomplishments; it never carried over to our children as his message was always one of being a good team member and supporting your team in whatever way you could. He preached good sportsmanship and never disrespecting anyone while on the field of play.

Charlie and I did find time to take our children on vacations, but I knew Charlie would be on the phone daily as he could never truly take a vacation. This continued throughout his 22-year career and he never once complained about it but accepted and honored this responsibility. He would routinely quip, "I do not have a nine-to-five job." Charlie was always loyal and accountable to us as his family, the FBI, his superiors and his friends, and this never wavered as long as I have known Charlie.

Charlie and I have had our ups and downs in our marriage as many couples do but even though Charlie has made mistakes, he has always been there for me as his wife and our children. We have endured together for over thirty years together and we still maintain a functional and loving relationship given Charlie's current situation. I'm hopeful and confident we can handle the outcome of this situation and the results of your decision in administering punishment on Charlie, but to be separated from him will be painful and I know he will suffer significantly being separated from me and our children for any period of time.

I could go on for hours about how much Charlie means to me, our children and everyone who knows Charlie but I'm hopeful you recognize from the sentiment in this letter how much we love and adore Charlie. Charlie has expressed significant remorse for his actions and has consistently accepted responsibility for his actions. Charlie has steadfastly said he will accept whatever sentence you hand down and will do so in a respectful and honorable manner. I try not to think about Charlie being separated from me and our children. Although they are adults, Charlie's presence and influence in their daily lives is irreplaceable and I cannot imagine trying to fill this void if Charlie is incarcerated. I can't think of anything worse than not having Charlie present with me at home, during meals and together with our family. It would create a significant hardship for me and our children. Charlie has asked for forgiveness and mercy from

me and those closest to him and consistently offers prayers of forgiveness to the Lord routinely during church services on Sunday and every day in his private prayers. I ask you for leniency when considering punishment for Charlie as he truly is one of a kind and someone who our family relies on as a figure of strength and inspiration. Just know he is truly loved and adored by many, and they rely on Charlie for his kindness, friendship, mental and emotional support and for his giving heart. On behalf of Sarah, Connor and our extended family, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to write this letter of support on Charlie's behalf.

Sincerely,

*Pamela McGonigal*

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